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By-Zimpfer, David G.; And Others

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Descriptors-Communication Skills, *Counselor Role, *Group Counseling, Group Dynamics, Self Concept

This panel is based on the assumptions that: (1) group counseling has a valuable contribution to make, (2) group counseling is feasible in terms of time and space at local institutions, (3) group counseling is particularly concerned with affective material, and (4) group counseling probably cannot be conducted effectively in groups as large as 30. Alan Anderson presents a group dynamics framework in which he discusses what is expected of group members, primary growth influences, composition and duration of groups, and primary group counselor concerns. Ann Abbey relates group counseling to gregariousness and communication needs in human nature, and proposes methods of implementing group work in existing educational situations. Stanley Caplan interprets group counselor style as the impact of the counselor's behavior on group members. Benjamin Cohn discusses techniques and concerns of counseling with groups of children, primarily from grades four to 10, with the major stress on teaching honest feedback, sensitivity to others, and practicing these in everyday communication. Walter Lifton is concerned both with the question of honesty in eliciting conformity as a result of the counseling process and with openness of communication. Merle Ohlsen discusses client participation, in both the group process and in life. (BP)

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A COMPARISON

OF

APPROACHES TO GROUP COUNSELING

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
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A panel presentation and discussion at the APGA Convention in Dallas, Texas, March, 1967. Chairman, David G.Zimpfer. Panelists: Alan Anderson, Harold Bernard, Stanley Caplan, Benjamin Cohn, Walter Lifton, Merle Ohlsen.

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A COMPARISON
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DAVID ZIMPFER:

The purpose of session this morning is to compare approaches to group counseling. I'd like to share with you some of the reasons that prompted the development of this program. Each year at the APGA convention several programs concerned with group counseling are scheduled. Usually the program is a research report, or a demonstration based on some one person's particular approach. There has never been to my knowledge a program which was intended to acquaint people with several of the rationales, purposes, and styles in counseling with groups, and to subject them to critical comparison. It is that which forms the purpose of this program today.

In the literature one can get the impression that group counseling, inasmuch as it is distinguished from individual counseling, is by that fact suitably and adequately described; that its uniqueness is accounted for by the unique physical setting in which it is conducted. It seems often to be assumed that whatever goes on in group counseling will be the same from one setting to the next--no matter what kind of group, no matter who the counselor, no matter who the clientele.

One thing I believe is becoming evident today is that group counseling has many rationales and styles. It has proponents of at least as many different points of view as individual counseling. The style one adopts is a function of his purposes and how he chooses to bring about change, of his decision to use or not use the forces that operate within a group, to focus or not focus on these as elements of the learning process. Further, group counselors differ on a variety of practical issues such as how large a group should be, how to choose members, what to do if one member drops out, and so on.

There are assembled here today six people who are known for their contributions in group counseling practice and literature, and I'd like to introduce them to you: Dr. Alan Anderson of the University of Minnesota; Miss Ann Abbey who is substituting this morning for Dr. Harold Bernard, who the computer placed on several programs simultaneously this morning; Dr. Stanley Caplan of the Southwestern Cooperative Educational Laboratory; Dr. Benjamin Cohn of the Board of Cooperative Educational Services of Bedford Hills, New York; Dr. Walter Lifton of the City School District of Rochester, New York; Dr. Merle Ohlsen of the University of Illinois.

I believe that this panel will examplify some of the differences in approach that I've been suggesting.

The program is divided into two parts. In the first part each member on the panel will attempt to summarize briefly the essence of his own personal view of group counseling. He may describe what he considers to be important philosophical, psychological, or procedural considerations that form a basis for his particular approach. He may outline what he sees are the unique points in his own style, and he may also describe how he can best evaluate the outcomes of his approach to group counseling.

The second part of the program will consist of an open panel discussion. Here the speakers will have an opportunity to focus on the similarities and differences among their approaches, and to examine both common problems and those which may be special to a particular person's style.

There are certain assumptions about group counseling which must be made as the basis for these presentations, and whose acceptance is not intended to be subject to question at this session: 1) group counseling has a valuable contribution to make. The evidence seems fairly conclusive that under a variety of conditions and for a variety of clientele group counseling has been shown to be beneficial in effecting positive change. Thus we're not debating whether group procedures have been or can be proven helpful to individuals. That is taken as a given for today. 2) group counseling is feasible in terms of finding time and space in your local institutions. We're not debating the limitation imposed by such circumstances as whether a school's master schedule permits it or whether there are rooms available for group counseling. Again, let's assume this. 3) group counseling is particularly concerned, but may not be exclusively concerned, with affective material: attitudes, feelings, opinions. It's not primarily informational, nor is it focused primarily on broad social problems apart from the individual's perception of them. 4) group counseling probably cannot effectively be conducted in large settings such as classrooms of thirty students.

ALAN ANDERSON:

I'd like first to present a framework for counseling and to fit group counseling into it if possible. Group counseling as I see it is essentially an application of group dynamics to the counseling process. There are those, I think, who look at group counseling as counseling applied to the group process - for me this puts the cart before the horse. I think group conseling is counseling first and foremost, and therefore we ought to see what there is about group dynamics that can be applied to the counseling process. Such a definition requires an examination of what counseling is plus what group dynamics are involved, and how and when the two can be effectively combined in the interests of individual development.

The framework also logically leads to two implications: 1) that the group is secondary to the individual as a source of primary concern and 2) that group counseling would be used only when it is perceived as being more efficient than individual counseling in helping clients to achieve their goal. By efficient I don't mean the advantage that was cited in the beginning of the era of group counseling, i.e. that group counseling has advantages because you can see more people at once. I'm talking about group counseling as a treatment of choice, because there's something about getting a group of people together that is more helpful to the individual than doing it on a one-to-one basis.

With regard to what counseling is, I'd like to propose a model which I hope might be acceptable, not necessarily as the best, but as a workable model, to most practitioners in professional counseling. I'd like the others on the panel to react to this to see if this is common ground or whether I'm making too many assumptions.

It's a very simple model. I propose simply that counseling is a process of teaching people to examine their lives or certain aspects thereof intimately and rationally. And on the basis of that examination individuals can either modify their behavior or more fully accept the manner in which they cope with their environment. This isn't too different from what Froehlich (1) and others were saying twenty years ago. But it uses terminology that makes it possible for me to develop constructs that become testable in research.

In practice, as I employ it, this model consists of the following steps: 1) Identification of a specific goal or goals which is or are mutually acceptable to the client and the counselor. I've never known anyone yet try to help someone do something they didn't want them to do. So I emphasize the mutual acceptability of the goal to both client and counselor. 2) A commitment on the part of the client to do what he can to achieve the goal or goals agreed upon, and 3) The development of an action program designed to facilitate reaching the goal or goals.

My own preference through my experience is that this can be done more efficiently when the goals or outcomes are stated as specific behaviors, to be either learned or eliminated. If it's behavior that you want to get rid of, then you use a different approach than if it's behavior to be learned, ~~you do what you can to learn it~~.

My experience has been that I can help a client to identify an initial goal and can obtain a commitment to work toward that goal most efficiently in an individual counseling session. Others may have different experiences. I've found that I'm a better diagnostician than most group members, and I can do this most efficiently in a short in-take interview than I can by trying to get the group together first and then trying to perform that task. And having achieved this in the individual session, that is the identification of a goal and the commitment to work toward it, I explain to the client just what will be expected of him in the group. And that is the following: 1) He is expected to inform the group of his goal and to request their help in achieving it. 2) He is to be honest with the group at all times. 3) He is to accept primary responsibility for his own behavior. Responsible behavior here is defined as that behavior which helps him to achieve his goal. Irresponsible behavior is defined as behavior which does not help him to achieve his goal. So here is an operational definition that the group can work with. 4) I ask him to accept responsibility for helping other members of the group to achieve their goals, and that may include doing or saying those things which may hurt or temporarily alienate another member of the group. Of course he would say or do these things only if he is convinced that they are in the best interest of the other person, despite the risk that may be involved.

I have found that these rules, if adhered to, soon enable the group to interact freely and productively. They provide for sufficient pertinent data to be presented for the group to work with, and provide a sense of trust and security, since everyone's behavior, including the leader's, becomes quite predictable. I think predictability has a large part in the amount of trust that you can get in a group.

As for the primary growth influences in group counseling, I would identify them essentially as three--not as exhaustive, but as the main ones. 1) Openness of communication. The more I've thought through the issues, the more I would tend to equate what Rogers and his followers have called acceptance with openness. I've found, for example, that when I refuse to be open with somebody, the extent to which I will not be open is an indication of the degree to which I do not accept them. If I accept them, I'm very honest with them. 2) Another growth producing influence has to involve the positive peer group pressures which, under the leader's direction, should be based on each person's commitment to his goal. The work of Lewin and the social psychologists has given us a lot of data as to how we can mobilize the group in helping each person to achieve his goal, and apply the kind of pressures that we sometimes need to break through our habituated behavior into a new pattern that we can see as important for us. 3) And systematic reinforcements

teach the group to systematically reinforce each other through their action program. So the leader's job is essentially that of helping the group to follow the rules and teach the members to communicate in such a way that it becomes helpful to them. He'll also help them to utilize their behavior in the group, to identify new goals when appropriate, and to work out suitable action programs when pursuing these goals.

The modes of communication which I've found most productive so far are confrontation and selective positive reinforcement. As groups develop they become more confrontive and they become more skilled in the process of selective reinforcement.

The focus in my group is nearly always on an individual--a topic person--rather than on group issues and group process. I feel most comfortable in a group of about eight to twelve, although some research suggests that with sufficient skill, appropriate structure, and certain clientele, groups of fifty or even up to one hundred can be quite productive. With younger groups where discipline may be a major concern, I would reduce the number to four to six. For example, in working with junior high school groups I've found that until they become disciplined you've got to keep the group pretty small.

I prefer to have both sexes represented as a rule, and except for homosexuals and delinquents, prefer heterogeneity with regard to problems and goals. I would keep the age span down, particularly with younger groups. It's usually helpful to have at least a couple of aggressive members to keep things stirred up a bit.

With regard to duration, I prefer open-ended groups, that is, groups that go on indefinitely, but in which members come and go. Some members may need only two or three sessions, others may need forty or fifty in order to achieve their goals. This gives you the advantage of always having a few experienced members in the group instead of always starting from scratch. However, I have found that other factors often determine the duration, so we usually have to adjust to the modus operandi to meet administrative demands.

In summary I would say that group counselors are concerned with two aspects, 1) Teaching clients directly to examine and modify their behavior, and 2) ~~In group work to~~ teach them to teach each other to examine and modify their behavior.

ANN ABBEY (for Harold Bernard):

The question is basically asked, in some form or another, what is basic in human nature? It will be maintained in this presentation that the basics of human nature are non-capacity and eagerness to learn. We learn our intelligence; we learn our personality; we learn our human nature. And these are learned through our association with others. We learn through our association with groups: families, play-groups, school groups, neighborhood groups. But these learnings are so basic

that they're taken for granted to some extent, and there is a failure to examine fully and to exploit adequately the phenomena of human dynamics.

The importance of groups has been emphasized by members of APGA in recent publications. George Pierson of Queens College focused firmly on groups as a teaching-learning approach (2). His report on regular session NDEA Institutes in 1964-65 devoted much attention to the group as an educator. He found that in most Institutes there was much attention and time devoted to group process in various forms. Carl Rogers has also devoted attention to the group in recent publications, i.e. relating to his personal encounters (3). He indicates the concern that the interpersonal relationship in small groups is an educational device with great promise. He also indicates that there are great dangers which must be avoided, lest we frighten people and people in general and school people in particular before some of the fruits have been harvested. At the Division of Continuing Education at the Oregon State System of Higher Education in Portland, we have used groups in many forms as an approach to counselor education. Students in the counselor education program constitute the initial group. They are involved in two major ways: one is in the form of what we call interpersonal process in which self-examination, self-appraisal, self-discovery is supplemented by observation of a particular person by others in the same group. The other major form is using lecture; and after the formal lecture by a staff member, there follows an evaluation and questioning by the members of designated discussion groups. The focus in both groups is upon what each individual brings to the group, either in terms of honest self-evaluation, or in terms of the information that he might want to share. We try to get ourselves and the students to keep asking, "What is my responsibility, how much am I responsible, what part of the situation is my perception?" As soon as students can ask, "How much is due to my perception, how much is due to my behavior?", we begin to feel that the group process is being facilitated. It is at this point of being a participant rather than being an observer that the group becomes an educator. It is at this point of being involved rather than being an evaluator that the work of the group is facilitated.

In addition to participation in groups as students, those in the program are asked to organize their own group and act as leader. These groups take three forms: 1) groups of school children are organized in schools where practicum is conducted. Students are always assigned to schools in pairs and trios, and usually a student works with someone from his own process group, someone who is familiar with his background, his frame of reference, his antecedents, so he gets immediate feedback.

2) Students are expected to participate in family group consultations, which groups may be either in the practicum school or in the Center of Continuing Education. 3) Thirdly, and this is the final stage which is our major preoccupation at this time of the school year, we ask the enrollees to organize groups of teachers. These teacher-groups have two major purposes. One aim is to get the teachers to take some evaluative look at themselves as the enrollees have done in their interpersonal process group. Our hope is that the teachers will start asking themselves what effect their behavior has on other people. And when they can do this instead of projecting learning resistence and learning difficulties on such things as low I.Q., lack of motivation, and the old stand-by, the status quo attitude of administrators, they are on the way to effective use of group process in the classroom. Our second aim with teachers is to get them to use group process as one of the very valuable tools to classroom learning, but only one approach to classroom learning.

Despite the fact that man is a verbal creature, he does not communicate with maximum efficiency and clarity. Groups are not an end of themselves; they are a tool for teaching better communication skills. Because in groups the counselor does not need to carry even 50% of the conversational load, he has an improved opportunity to listen to verbal clues, and to listen for what is in back of them. He has an improved opportunity to observe non-verbal clues and ask questions about them.

Group counseling provides excellent opportunity to listen and observe as well as to speak. Thus the use of groups, we think, allows us to take a little firmer step than would otherwise be possible toward the achievement of our humanity.

STANLEY CAPLAN:

In trying, to interpret whatever the essence is of my group counseling style to people I have to begin with the statement that after a session like this, if you weren't acutely aware of it before you will be now: we are our style, and that's all that style amounts to. What I do in group counseling is Stan Caplan, and that's all the process is as far as I know about it. It's what impact I can have on people, the same as I can have from individual counseling: to help them make new choices, to assume responsibility for choices, to act on choices. To have new experiences of self in different ways, to try out new behaviors in a stated situation, to bounce new behaviors on fellows after they've gone from the interview and try them out in the groups in which they live, and come back and get praise and punishment as they are confronted with the results of their behavior in the group itself--these are the opportunities in group counseling.

Certainly I put the same premium as the previous speakers do upon listening intelligently, becoming open to others, seeking the identity that we're all actors in human life. But in the last few years I've become increasingly dissatisfied with this alone. In working primarily with the behavioral psychologist, Lloyd Hahn, I've been trying to see what I could gather out of self-management procedures to see what I could do in groups that would help people behave differently as well as feel differently about themselves once they got out of the interview. And perhaps this also reflects my concern with getting the things that happen in group counseling to continue after the session stops in these people's lives. I've had some very warm experiences as many of you have had. I recall one in which the group counseling was of an intensive kind. The experience was very rewarding and I'll never forget it. But if I were asked to spell out the results of that kind of group counseling in terms of changing my behavior, I'd be hard-put to operationalize them. So in my effort to identify whatever I'm doing, I've sought such items as self-management schedules in groups, getting groups to help each individual to define his problem in the group in such a way that he himself can know or measure when he's achieved it on the outside. For example, if he feels better about himself, how does he demonstrate this when he goes out and works with his employer or goes home and talks with his mother? If he drinks, is there something about just being self-actualizing or is he actually stopping going to the corner bar every night? Thus what is happening on the outside is becoming an increasing concern of mine. Continuing kinds of groups with short periods, intermittent groups, short times of sessions, have become devices to continue changes and to try to make them permanent. I think I'm having some success in this area.

I'm hardly concerned at all with such items as size of the group, composition of the group, nature of problems discussed, sex mixture, age mixture, and the like, except to say that I also agree that at very early ages too great a spread of age is a problem. I feel that this is a function of me, just as I feel this whole thing is a function of the counselor, rather than anything delimiting in the technique itself.

If I were just good enough, I probably could work with all kinds of combinations, all kinds of sizes, and all kinds of time interval. I've read with interest some of the new information coming out on the use of time as a variable in both group and individual counseling. We have to look at this very thoroughly. There may be great opportunities, in school systems especially, for group counseling with some very short time groups for very specific purposes. In essence then, my group counseling philosophy is very much concerned with purpose. I don't think

there's one kind of group counseling which serves all purposes. What is it you want to do with this particular group of people that will help each of them individually to find a goal and achieve it? What is it you want to do with this particular group as a whole that will help them achieve a group goal if there is one? This will then determine the rest of the limitations and the kinds of techniques that you use. In this you search for yourself and what works for you.

BENJAMIN COHN:

My orientation is with the school child, usually from grades 4 - 9 or 10. I make certain basic assumptions, but before we get to these you have to consider the conditions under which I work. Working in a school we have the limit of vacation periods, the limit of semesters, the limit of space, the limit of facilities, how quiet the rooms are and this kind of thing. We also have the major problems of referrals. In a public school usually the counselors or the teachers make the referrals. They would like to see me work with underachievers, acting-out kids, withdrawn kids--the kinds of problems they see every day. And as such these kids are sent and not highly motivated for change. I think the truth of the matter is that they are highly motivated for change, but they want to change in their way, not ours. It's my job to stimulate them, to find a way of motivating them, to work with the problems that they can see that they can change, given the opportunity to talk about them to an accepting adult.

I make certain basic assumptions with adolescents: 1) Most adolescent problems are related to their self-concept, the way they feel about themselves. 2) The self-concept is molded by the important people in their lives: their parents, teachers, friends. 3) An adolescent, when made aware of his feelings about himself, is able to share his feelings with others if he realizes that these feelings are not uncommon. If he realizes how these feelings about himself were formed, he could and probably would learn to cope with his problems, and possibly change if this is what he wanted to do.

If we accept the above assumptions, the first part of my counseling would be spent helping the students help each other become more aware of their own feelings about themselves, their self-concept. Next, I try to help the group become aware of the influencing factors related to this self-concept. And third we then go into a reeducative process where we try to find out ways of actually trying out resolving some of these problems that are affecting their self-concept. So the major emphasis in this type of counseling is on the self-concept. Whichever technique is used, the emphasis is always on the clarification of, understanding, and working with the self-concept.

The basic techniques used are counselee-centered, group-centered, and goal-centered. These techniques are used intermittently; they're not used in any prescribed sequence. During the first phase where they're becoming aware of their own self-concepts, we can use any of these three techniques.

The counselee-centered techniques would help the counselee expand and clarify his feelings about himself. These include, among others, the leads of questioning, clarification, and reflection of both feeling and content.

The manipulative or group-centered techniques help the counselee to see other possible solutions or alternatives. These techniques include probing, teaching them to give honest feedback, presenting alternatives, suggesting extremes, setting up situations, and occasionally initiating problems.

The goal-oriented techniques are generally used in the re-educative phase of the counseling, to help counselees work through situations and actually learn new ways of handling problems. These include role-playing situational analysis, information-giving, and support.

If I were going to describe the major thing that I try to accomplish, it is to teach counselees to give honest feedback, learn to respond to each other and communicate sincerely how they feel in certain situations. A second purpose is to help them to be aware or sensitive to the feelings of others so that they can respond to the real person sitting across from them. A third goal is to have them begin to practice and use the sensitivity and feedback so that it becomes part of their every day communication, so that they can be honest in relating to other people. This seems to be one of their major difficulties. They respond emotionally and don't understand what the emotion is behind their response. They get into all kinds of trouble when limited in this way.

My major role in all this is to be a catalyst, to get them started. They have the responsibility for growth.

WALTER LIFTON

When trying to identify the goals of counseling there is frequently used the concept of adjustment or conformity. It comes up either in the tone of phrasing a goal or in its actual wording. For example, it might be worded: "Let's help these people learn to get along in a society that has certain expectations." This has me disturbed.

We're not too far from Berkeley, and we're not too far in different parts of the country from the work of the Alinsky groups. The poverty program is teaching us a lot and we should learn from it. In a professional organization like APGA we assume that we have the better answers, that we know how to do it. But we'd better listen to the voices of experience beyond only our own. I'm not talking about merely the techniques of helping a group learn how to communicate. I'm going, rather to the ultimates in counseling process. When one says that the client sets the goals, as one of our other speakers has, I'm not sure he really means it. Some of the goals these clients are going to set you're not going to like, or will be unacceptable to your institution; and might put you out of business.

I think we've also been talking about the role of the school versus society, and that really scares me. As soon as we start dichotomizing school and society--and that's exactly what the kids complain about because they don't see the reality of the school in the society they know they face when they leave school at the end of the day--we have failed.

So I'm asking a completely different kind of question - it's really got nothing to do with the techniques involved, and I know it. But I think it's pretty basic.

Stan said he had to be Stan. I've got to be Walt. I can't worry too much at the moment about how I serve as a catalytic agent. I'm deeply concerned with the honesty that we have as group leaders in letting the group have the right to come to decisions that we completely disagree with.

This is a society we hope we will be able to change. If the role of group counseling is to preserve the <u>status quo</u>, then you're going to be forcing some of your rebels to find other ways of rebelling because they can't get their answers through this technique.

I think one of our jobs is not only to help people see some of the feelings they've got that make them act the way they do and to teach openness of communication. These are certainly important. Likewise it is significant for the counselor to be a catalytic agent and to provide reality testing; these are the critical ingredients we're all going to agree on. But the thing we haven't been talking about is the role of a group as a group, as an instrument of changing the society itself so that they don't always have to adjust to it. We make the assumption that society is always right; but it isn't, and I think it's about time we begin to recognize that one of the tools that we ought to be giving people in our group sessions is the skill to <u>change</u> their environment, not just to cope with it.

For many of our youngsters that don't want to modify their behavior, they are lacking in information. But the information we're talking about is affective in nature. One of the problems we frequently find ourselves facing when we work with groups is the lack of opportunity of group members to see other roles whom they can emulate. And so for me, one of the jobs of the group leader, along with all the other jobs, is to see to it that in every group there is this opportunity for individuals to see the variety of roles needed in any counseling group in order for it to be able to accomplish its goal. If nobody else is able to play those roles, the leader ought to. I would say that if it takes the leader being the client to begin with, so be it. He can say to them by his behavior, "I'm not ashamed of me. I, too, have some things that I can use your help on." In this way we can begin to communicate an atmosphere of access and openness that's based not only on the way we're related, but by our own behavior we can show clients how they, too, can behave if they want to follow our lead. We can give them a variety of role behaviors to try in order to become more effective not only as a client, not only as a counselor, not only as a reactor, but also in any of the other kinds of important life situations.

I'm also deeply disturbed by one other problem I see growing in our profession. There's a book by Lifton (not Walter) (4) on brain-washing in China that I would recommend because he interviewed people as they came from China to discover what techniques were used by the Chinese to get conformity. I'm hearing conformity here today, only we're trying to get conformity to democracy. One of the things I learned as a sophomore in college that was very important for me was that the means determine the end. Since we are talking about counseling approaches, I think we should take a long look at whether we're using pressure and conditioning responses to achieve goals of conformity. These in the long run get people to act the way we want. Is this congruent with democracy? Do we believe in the goal of conformity?

MERLE OHLSEN:

Walt's comments remind me that perhaps we haven't taught our people to live in a democratic society. Gordon Allport some 20 or 25 years ago wrote a beautiful paper on what happens to people when they don't get engaged in the stream of life. He talked about a kind of engagement that can be achieved only in a democratic society. The people that Walt is talking about are people who haven't learned how to do it. As Allport said then, when people fail to participate, when they fail to get engaged, when they fail to get their gears meshed in the activities of life, then they're going to be reacting, they're going to become a pawn for any demagogue. As an example: youth gangs

lacking any real fellowship, but having instead complete domination, complete conformity.

So I think we have to look at a whole group of problems. Today I'd like to stress a few points--perhaps it's too ambitious to call them principles--that guide my behavior in group counseling. Before that I'd like to say that one characteristic of an effective counselor is someone who knows what he can do and believes he can do it. I find myself asking increasingly, what am I trying to do and do I really believe I can do it? If we ask our clients, "What do you want me to do?" I think we're going to frighten them because they're not sure they want to come to us at all. And through the years I think we have a right to decide how we can be most effective; we should also describe this to our prospective clients so that they know what they're getting into before they get into it. What's crucial for them is that we convey what Walt and some of the others are talking about: that they can have goals but the goals must be within the restrictions of society, because we have laws and if you don't live by the laws you get jailed or punished in some way. What I'm concerned about in these opening remarks is that we haven't taught them how to change the laws. So they need to learn how to participate in setting the guidelines, whether it's a counseling group, or whatever kind of group and they need to feel respected when they come to conclusions different from others. Most of the studies show that in a really accepting group, people become increasingly tolerant of each other.

The first principle: <u>expectation</u>. Clients profit most from a group when they understand what is expected before they decide to join a counseling group. I expect clients to talk openly about the problems that bother them. I expect them to be committed to change their behavior and attitude. I expect them to help me develop a therapeutic climate. I expect them to help others; indeed, I expect them to put pressure on each other to change their behavior. I think the basic structuring is going to be done prior to the time they ever get in the group, and clarification of what should happen in the group is going to arise from this. When I work in the public schools, I go to the classrooms to tell children in elementary school and high school what counseling is, what kind of help they can expect, and then let them decide if they want to join the group. I think if you go to classrooms, people <u>will</u> ask to join the group, as several people have suggested.

They have a chance to quiz you and put you on the spot. There are many things they'd like to talk about, and they'll recognize they can get <u>this</u> kind of help in a group.

In this process of orientation to counseling, I try to help them to find goals. I don't say, "What are your goals?", but I listen to the things with which they would like help. In the course of counseling I try to help them examine how they can tell when they get anywhere so they get constant feedback.

I also believe in a structured intake interview. I use it to get to know each of the clients better, to answer any questions they have about the treatment process, and to give them a chance to talk openly about the things that concern them, thereby increasing their readiness to talk in the group. I also use the intake interview to give them the chance to prove to me that they have the kind of commitment to change that's necessary.

This leads to my second principle, the principle of commitment: those who profit most from group counseling are willing to try to talk about the things that bother them; they're committed to change their behavior and to help others change. They have confidence in the treatment process. They have so much confidence that they'll try to make it work, even when the going gets tough.

The third principle is belonging, and you'll recognize a lot of these coming from an old paper by Cartwright (5). Both those who are to be changed and those who influence change must sense a genuine feeling of belonging. As the feeling of belonging increases, clients become more ego-involved in interaction. They participate more meaningfully and they increase their commitment for change. I've called your attention earlier in my remarks to Allport.

The next principle is acceptance. Acceptance by the group, and the member's confidence in each member's ability to solve his problems provides encouragement and support that a member needs in order to change his behavior. Counselors are often afraid to deal with the things that are hurtful. They may say: "If I recognize in you something that's bothering you, I'm afraid to touch it lest I hurt you too much." Instead, I would hold that the very act of reflecting the thing that's bothering you, reflecting the feeling, helping you talk about it, I'm saying to you, "I care about you and I want to help you, and I believe you can cope with it."

Attractiveness. The more attractive a group is to its members the greater the influence that that group can expect to have on its members. I use several points to make a group attractive. If I'm talking to a group of high school youngsters, I talk about what group counseling is and how it may help people. I also talk about some of the kinds of problems the people discuss in the group. I always use at least one example of an athlete

who is nervous and drops the ball or something else so I attract to that group some of the wholesome, most honored members of the student body. When they see Joe, the star football player that drops an occasional kick--when he can come and ask for help, everybody can. I also focus on normal individuals because I like to focus on preventive work. I also wait until I get more people asking to join the group than can possibly get in. This applies what we know from a number of studies on attractiveness. When they know they really have to make an effort to get in, the group becomes increasingly attractive. The most attractive clubs, even those with lousy programs, are those that are most difficult to get into.

Responsibility. With increased responsibility, clients increase their productivity in a counseling group. Here I begin with voluntary commitment and participation. I try to help clients find their responsibility in the group; I tell them what to expect. I try to help them discover how they can discover each other's responsibilities and give them the courage and support to act responsibly. On this point I like Lasser's definition that each one of us has a right to do anything we can to develop ourself as long as we act out of consideration to others.

Security. The safer a client feels in a group the easier it is for him to be open and transparent. Although he realizes at times the experience is painful, he's willing to tolerate the pain in a safe environment in order to reap the benefits of group counseling.

Tension. When a group is productive there will be tension, but it will be perceived as tolerable. The study by Clark and Talland shows that his groups were helped most when they dealt with the most painful topics (6).

Group Norms. Here you can look to the work of Frank and Kellman, and many others. They say that if the members really understand what's expected and if they believe in the counselor, they're going to define group norms which are therapeutic. Furthermore, they're going to enforce them because they have confidence in the process and the person who helps them achieve these goals.

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	This paper, page:	Reference
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5.	14	Cartwright, Dorwin, "Achieving Change in People: Some Applications of Group Dynamics Theory", Human Relations, 1951, 4, 381-392.
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NOTE TO THE READER

The reader is advised that the panel also engaged in critiquing itself, and in responding to questions from the audience. The following topics were discussed:

Philosophy of group work:
- Individual or group as primary concern.

Leadership:
- Leader as peer or different in status.

Techniques:
- Tools for changing environments.
- Manipulation in counseling.
- Diagnosis.
- Kinds of intervention.
- Concomitant group and individual treatment.

Counselees:
- Age for initiating counseling.
- Commitment as prerequisite attribute.

Further uses of group counseling:
- Identifying the effects of one's own behavior.
- Group counseling as an experience in corporate living.

Group composition:
- Counselor personality as an input governing composition of group.

Ethical questions:
- What composition will permit each counselee to function best?
- Issue of parent refusing counseling for a minor who desires help.
- Issue of counselor action in event a group adopts inappropriate goals.
- Observation by teachers and parents.